

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14188 281510Z
ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2707
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 14188

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT SHU CSCE ASEC CGEN UR US
SUBJECT: GEORGIANS IN EMBASSY

REF: MOSCOW 14108

SUMMARY: EMBASSY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONVINCE GEORGIANS TO LEAVE
EMBASSY DESPITE SEVERAL EXCHANGES WITH THEM AND INTERCESSION WITH
MFA. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY'S POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND CONSOFF MET WITH MFA USA
DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR K.G. FEDOSEYEV MORNING SEPTEMBER 28.
AFTER NOTING COMMON US/USSR INTEREST IN AVOIDING PUBLICITY IN
MATTER AND GEORGIANS' REQUEST THAT EMBASSY SPEAK IN THEIR BEHALF,
POLITICAL COUNSELOR HANDED FEDOSEYEV LIST OF SIX GEORGIANS IN EMBSSY.
HE POINTED OUT THAT GEORGIANS WERE SIMPLE, APOLITICAL, BUT HIGHLY
EMOTIONAL PEASANTS FOR WHOM A MAJOR CONCERN WAS FATE OF FIVE MEMBERS
OF GROUP DETAINED BY MILITIA. FEDOSEYEV REPLIED HE HAD NOT BEEN
AWARE OF GEORGIANS' ENTRY TO EMBASSY BUT THAT HE COULD GUARANTEE
THAT "THERE WILL BE NO PUNISHMENT FOR JUST VISITING THE EMBASSY."
WHEN POL COUNSELOR INQUIRED WHETHER WE COULD CONVEY THIS ORAL
ASSURANCE, FEDOSEYEV ASKED US TO WAIT THIRTY MINUTES (TO SEE
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WHETHER HE HAD ANYTHING FURTHER TO ADD) AND AGREED THAT IF WE
DID NOT HEAR FROM HIM, WE WOULD PASS THIS ASSURANCE. HE ALSO
PROMISED TO CHECK STATUS OF OTHER FIVE GEORGIANS.

2. AT 1400, EMBASSY HAD NOT HEARD FROM FEDOSEYEV AND CONSULAR
COUNSELOR DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH SIX GEORGIANS. GEORGIANS
INITIALLY REQUESTED LETTER FROM EMBASSY STATING THAT THEY WOULD

NOT BE PUNISHED, BUT WHEN LETTER WAS HANDED TO THEM, THEY RAISED NEW CONDITION. THEY DEMANDED THAT PETITION BE CABLED TO DEPARTMENT AND STATED THEY WOULD NOT LEAVE UNTIL REPLY RECEIVED.

3. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO CABLING PETITION, WE BELIEVE THAT IF RESPONSE DOES NOT MEET THEIR DESIRES, THIS ADDITIONAL STEP WILL STILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO PERSUADE THEM TO LEAVE, AND ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS MAY LEAD THEM TO BELIEVE THAT ADAMANT REFUSAL TO DEPART EMBASSY WILL EVENTUALLY GET THEM WHAT THEY WANT, WHICH IS ADMISSION TO US.

4. EMBASSY IS, OF COURSE, MOST RELUCTANT TO USE FORCE. ALTERNATIVE IS TO TRY TO WAIT THEM OUT. EMBASSY HAS THUS FAR NOT PROVIDED GEORGIANS WITH FOOD (WHICH THEY HAVE NOT REQUESTED). HOWEVER, SENILE LITHUANIAN, ALEKSANDRAS SKOPAS, WHO, AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE HAS BEEN COMING TO EMBASSY FOR PAST SIX WEEKS, HAS BEEN OBSERVED PASSING FOOD TO THEM.

5. SITUATION HAS NOT YET COME TO ATTENTION OF US CORRESPONDENTS IN MOSCOW, BUT IS LIKELY TO AT ANY TIME. EITHER ALTERNATIVE--USE OF FORCE OR REFUSAL TO PROVIDE FOOD--LIKELY TO GENERATE PRESS AND PUBLIC CRITICISM.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON DEALING WITH WALK-INS AND IN RESPONDING TO PRESS QUERIES.

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